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Club,

Its Purpose and Policy.

AS SET FORTH IN THE SPEECH OF

ERASTUS WIMAN, President.

DOMINION DAY DINNER,

July 1, 1885.

PRINTED FOR THE CLUB.

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CLUB ROOMS:

NO. 3 NORTH WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK.

NEW YORK, July 8, 1885.

TO ERASTUS WIMAN,

President Canadian Club.

DEAR SIR :—

In view of the necessity of presenting to our fellow countrymen the claims of the "Canadian Club" upon their consideration, and also to set forth the object to be accomplished, and the policy it is wise to pursue, it is thought necessary to make some presentation of these, in pamphlet form. We know nothing that would do this better than the speech you made at the dinner, given on the opening night, Dominion Day. We therefore request permission to publish it as among the first proceedings of the club.

Faithfully yours,

J. PATON,

H. HAGUE,

L. S. HUNTINGTON,

WILLIAM B. ELLISON,

AND OTHERS.

THE OPENING OF THE CANADIAN CLUB.

THE CANADIAN CLUB, which was recently formed in New York, was opened on Wednesday night, July 1st, Dominion Day. The occasion was celebrated by a dinner of the principal members, who crowded the fine rooms which have been provided for the Club in the new Artist Building, No. 3 Washington Square. The objects to be accomplished by the formation of the Club, and the general policy which it is likely to pursue, were fully discussed. Perhaps the most complete view of these is to be found in the speech of the President, as follows :

Mr. ERASTUS WIMAN said : When it was first suggested that a club distinctively Canadian should be formed in New York, there were some who felt that the attempt might not be attended with complete success, and that the objects which could be accomplished were both vague and uncertain. It was felt that, as there existed no other organization of similar import in this city, it would be in vain to attempt a combination of interests peculiarly Canadian. There was no Texas or Missouri Club, nor no Ohio or Pennsylvania Society ; and except the New England Society, which only dined together once a year, there was no organization distinctively geographical, which should have for its care the interests of the residents in New York from any special locality. Nevertheless, finding that there were somewhere about six thousand Canadians in New York, and that a very large proportion of these were almost unknown to each

other, it was felt that some central organization, which would enable a number of them to be brought together, would be productive of most beneficial results, and that there might be worked out of the idea, a mission of practical usefulness that would be helpful to all who would come within its radius. Accordingly, as you are aware, a meeting was called of the Canadian residents in New York at the Hotel Brunswick. The attendance was surprisingly large, and, what was more, surprisingly representative in character. It is doubtful if ever a meeting was held for the purpose of forming a club or society, which was attended by a larger number of persons, occupying positions of greater importance, and representing respectability and capacity to a greater extent. The first and subsequent meetings indicated an earnestness and enthusiasm which was a revelation to those who had originated the idea, and imbued them with the importance of their mission, and the possibility of great usefulness and eventual success. You see the results of those meetings in the beautiful rooms which, after infinite labor, the committee have selected and secured, and also in the present brilliant assembly, which, to my mind, is quite as representative in character as any other assembly which I have had the good fortune for many years to meet.

The period which has elapsed since the Club was first discussed, and the present hour, has had the effect of solidifying in the minds of all interested in it, the purposes to be accomplished, and of giving some definite shape and form to the scope and policy it would be wise to pursue.

In the first place, it is clear to all who are familiar with the position of Canadians in this city, that they are *workers*, that they come to this vast metropolis from a foreign country, for the avowed purpose of making a living, and a fortune, and becoming useful and reputable residents of the great

city that so heartily welcomes them. In the pursuit of these desirable objects, it is equally clear that economy, good habits, sobriety, and intelligence, will be the basis which will command success. As a rule, Canadians here are in moderate circumstances, and in this city the proportion of expense to the amount of income is, as you all know, excessive. Hence, the idea in forming the Club has been to make the cost as slight as possible, so that, in no sense, would it be an added tax upon the resources of those to whom it was intended to be useful. The majority of our members will doubtless be employees, in the receipt of regular and not excessive income. To such as occupy this position, it is hoped the Club will be a real use. The initiation fee of \$5.00, and annual dues of \$10.00, are smaller than those of any other club in the city. The membership will be necessarily limited, yet, in the face of this small sum and limited membership, we will, we think, be able to afford quarters and club privileges, almost as luxurious, and certainly as useful, as those of the great clubs whose admission will be ten times that of ours, and whose annual dues and charges would almost eat up the surplus of the average worker, whom we hope to welcome to our hearthstone. Economy and reasonable limits of expenditure have been the basis upon which your committee has proceeded. In the choice of location this had a large influence with it. We thought it better to be located pretty well down town, in the vicinity of respectable boarding houses, where young Canadian clerks, mechanics, and employees generally are located, so that in the evening, and during Sundays and holidays, there might be some pleasant and cheerful resort, where our countrymen would find pleasant companions; where the publications of our native land could be found and read; and where the leading periodicals of Great Britain could be scanned. The cheerful room, brilliantly lighted, with open fire, attractive companions; a game of billiards,

and an innocent game of cards ; good company ; and, above all, a sympathetic and cordial spirit, are surely something to provide for those who, in the proverbial boarding house, find scant comfort in narrow rooms, isolated and alone ; or who wander aimlessly through the streets of this great city, tempted at every turn to some departure from the rigid paths of rectitude. Surely some such shelter, as in these commodious rooms we can afford, will be a blessing to those who are enabled to occupy them. The solitude of great cities, the isolation of strangers, the utter indifference that exists as to the occupation or employment of the leisure moments of those who are taxed during business hours, has often occupied the minds of thoughtful philanthropists ; and I am proud to be one of the number who, for the sake of our own compatriots, here take the first step to provide a place of resort where good books, good newspapers, innocent games, and good companionship, free from vice or temptation, can be afforded. This is one of the objects which the Club has in view, and if, even to a limited extent, it can afford all the pleasures of club life for a limited sum, with all the delights of sociability and acquaintance, surely one great and good object will be accomplished.

Knowing something, as I do, of the occupations which Canadians in this city pursue, of the infinite variety of employments and responsibilities entrusted to them, I can safely say that there is no State in the Union, nor no country in Europe, that has greater reason to be proud of the progress of her sons, than has Canada of the position achieved by its residents here. There is hardly a department of commerce in this city, hardly an establishment of importance ; there is hardly success achieved, but somehow or another a Canadian has a hand in it. Indeed, it has got in the minds of some leading people to be almost an axiom that Canadians,

as a rule, are not only reliable, steady, and honest, but, by the peculiarity of their training, their thrift and capacity, they are peculiarly fitted to occupy positions of very great trust and responsibility. If you look among the hardest workers in the great field of metropolitan journalism in this city, you will find the men who are most respected and most relied upon, are Canadians. If you look among the insurance companies, you will find that among the men who do the detail of the work, and on whose judgment reliance can be placed, there will be found Canadians. If in Wall Street, in banking, probity, reliability, and capacity are needed, the Canadian banks and their excellent representatives occupy a position of the highest regard. Among the judges, in telegraphic circles, in railroads, mercantile or professional pursuits, there will be found, if not always brilliancy, certain reliability, promptitude, and efficiency, excelled by the representatives of no other community. This much can be said, that, while Canada has been made the last refuge of those who forfeit the trusts devolving upon them in this country, and to a certain extent has suffered in reputation by its contiguity to the great Republic, it has yet to be revealed that, among the vast number who have forfeited the confidence of their employers, or of the community, there has been a single Canadian. Though there are good and bad in all communities, and the taint of human depravity exists everywhere, yet, to the honor and glory of Canada, may it be said, that out of the vast representation which she has, not only in New York, but throughout the United States, not a single instance has occurred showing a breach of trust, the embezzlement of a single dollar, or the forfeiture of confidence in the slightest degree. On the contrary, it may be safely said that the representatives of no other community, in proportion to its numbers, stand higher in the regard of their employers and their associates than do the Canadians and

former residents of Canada, now resident in the United States.

Under such circumstances, I may, I think, with a great sense of congratulation, feel proud to be able to welcome you here to-night, as the first organization of a distinctive nationality, having for its purpose the promotion of our common interests, the improvement of our social relations, the enlargement of our acquaintance with each other, a healthful effort to assist those who need assistance, and to guide and direct others who are to join us hereafter in pursuit of a career of usefulness and fortune in this country. And here I would be doing a great injustice, did I fail to recognize the hearty spirit of good will with which, in this noble country, all efforts for efficient service are received and welcomed. The treatment of Canadians by Americans, so far as my observation has gone, has been characterized by the greatest possible liberality and appreciation. The success of Canadians in the United States is the best evidence of this. The spirit of liberty and equality, which welcomes to its shores the natives of every clime, by the people, especially of this great city, has been fully exemplified by the way in which Canadians have been treated, and the hearty good will with which their efforts as employees and business men have been met. Not the least indication of this has been the cordiality extended to the effort made in the formation of this Club, and the kind words of encouragement which have been uttered by the press and leading men with whom we have come in contact.

It is hoped that the Canadian Club will afford a means of communication between Canadians and former residents of Canada in this city; and that being, as it will, a central organization, it will afford a tie between them which, though slender and of delicate character, will nevertheless be effect-

ive in making them better acquainted with each other. It will, perhaps, be thus able to bring together, for the benefit of each other, men who otherwise would have proceeded in their respective paths without the benefits which the experiences of each other might have afforded, had contact been permitted. Thus, while individually this may be useful, collectively the organization may achieve a still larger usefulness, especially in relation to subjects peculiar to Canada, to be discussed in this country. Suggestions and ideas may be given shape and form, which otherwise would have lain dormant. By the creation of committees, whose special duties shall be the pursuit of some distinctive class of information, and the publication of such facts as can be elicited, the Club may be made very useful in the creation and formation of public opinion upon matters relating purely to Canada. Some intelligent source of statistics, facts and circumstances in relation to Canada, a library of reference in relation to Canadian matters, an accumulation of public journals, and, above all, intelligent Canadian opinion, may be focussed at this point for the benefit of journalists in this country. Public men, members of Congress, or others who desire to discuss subjects in relation to Canada intelligently, and with a full understanding of the subject, can here be met ; so that, aside from the social element, and the provision for mutual acquaintance and the promotion of each other's interests, we may, to a certain extent, aspire to the promulgation of better and larger information regarding our own country, and a greater degree of intelligence on subjects which, in this country, chiefly concern it.

There are, however, numerous details of usefulness, which, as time passes, the Club and its members will develope. One of these special details I beg now to suggest. It is that the walls of this beautiful room, which are admirably adapted

for the purpose, should be devoted, during the autumn months, to an exhibition of the works of Canadian artists. The glorious scenery of our native land, the gorgeous tints of its autumnal woods, as depicted by its artistic sons and daughters, might find place within our walls, to be admired and purchased by the residents of this great city, who, in matters of art, and appreciation of all that is beautiful, in conception, or design, have always evinced a spirit of the highest liberality. If Canadian art could but have a chance to impress itself favorably upon the wealthy picture buyers of this wealthy city, and the names of well-known Canadian artists could be made as familiar in New York as they are in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa, the Club would have achieved a purpose of the noblest and best kind. The pleasure which this exhibition of Canadian art would afford to Canadians themselves, the delight which the artists would have in the thorough appreciation of their fellow-countrymen in a foreign city, and the ennobling and refining influence which such an exhibition might well be expected to convey, will make the attempt worthy of the effort, even if no practical and financial results follow. But, in addition to pictures, there are other exhibitions of Canadian artistic skill, which the Club might well encourage, and this might take the form, just preceding the holidays, of a large collection from the Societies of Decorative Art, of woman's work, which, in Toronto and Montreal, have of late years been so successful. There is no reason why, among the pleasant mementoes of Christmas time in New York, there should not be ennumbered contributions from the nimble fingers and artistic skill of our Canadian sisters. Embroidery, fancy work, sketches, and all those delightful conceits of woman's leisure and woman's love, might well afford an exhibition in New York, of the refinement, skill, and taste of Canadian women. The club rooms could not be better employed during the day-time, and

with an occasional ladies' day, extending far into the evening, than in affording accommodation, and opportunity for sale, of the handiwork of our dear Canadian girls.

Other and larger conceptions of the advantages and duties of the Club, will, however, present themselves. It will be sufficient for me to simply say to you how heartily welcome you all are to-night; with what pleasurable anticipations we may look forward to an enjoyment of each other's society; and to the conviction, in my own mind, that the usefulness of our lives, the completeness and faithfulness of our service, and the growth within us of all that is manly and best, will be promoted by an association in which mutual forbearance, hearty appreciation, and a better knowledge of each other, such as I think may safely be expected to flow from the formation of the Canadian Club.

I have already referred gratefully to the abundant opportunity afforded Canadians in the United States, for the pursuit of fortune and fame, and the liberal and hearty good will with which Americans have admitted us to a generous rivalry with themselves in this pursuit. But, may we not be permitted to contemplate with pride, the position which our own dear land occupies. Side by side with this glorious Republic, Canada is working out the noble problem of self government. The marvelous success which in the Southern part of this vast continent has attended "the government of the People, for the People, by the People," is not more marked than is the success, which, in the regions of the North, attends the pursuit of Liberty, Law and Equality, by the People, under a different form of government, but with results equally beneficent. It is quite the common thing to believe that in the United States alone is being demonstrated the possibility of self government in its highest form, and that the experiment on the scale of which it is our good for-

tune to witness, of a vast nation self-regulated, self-poised, and with good reason, self-confident, is the only experiment where unqualified success is achieved. It is quite common to believe that no well regulated country can put up with the trappings of royalty, and that monarchies, and other indications of effete despotisms, must disappear in a free country, before a free people, who can assert their own progress and their own freedom. But in our beloved Canada, the spectacle is presented of a progressive and self-reliant people, enjoying the largest degree of liberty, with a voice in the government just as potent as in this country, and yet who yield a hearty allegiance to a form of government as old as the monarchy of England itself, and against which it was thought essential that the fathers of this country should make their great Declaration of Independence. It is true that the influences of that Declaration upon all nations of the World have been beyond all calculation, and that the freedom of Canada from interference from England, and the liberality with which, by the Home Government, she has been treated, are directly traceable to the influences set in motion by the wise and patriotic statesmen, who set afloat, on an unknown sea, the ship of state, under whose flag we safely live and thrive. With the acknowledgment to the United States of the example set, and the influences put in motion at their instance, it nevertheless can be claimed for Canada that, in her own way, with circumstances so peculiar, and with a geographical position far less favorable, she has made a progress in Government, in Legislation, in Law, in Science, in Art, and in development of material resources, equal to that of any country in the world. When it is recalled that the Dominion occupies a portion of the continent quite as large as that of the United States, with the disadvantages of a lack of variety in her products, with which the United States is favored, her progress, when

placed side by side with this country, is remarkable. Her ships, from the Maritime Provinces, whiten every sea with their sails ; her fisheries are the envy of her neighbors ; her banking institutions are the largest, the richest, and the soundest on the continent ; her canals and waterways are the grandest in the world ; her railways rival those of every other country in their length, extent, and amplitude of communication. Just think of that magnificent stretch of iron bands, extending from the waters of the Atlantic, at Halifax, to Quebec, in the Inter-colonial line ; the magnitude of the region covered by the Grand Trunk system, with its complete and efficient service ; and above all, the splendid achievements in the Canadian Pacific, which, unlike any Pacific Trunk Line in the United States, running only from the centre to the circumference of the continent, this magnificent work stretches from ocean to ocean, under one control, and one impulse. The completion of the Canadian Pacific marks the day when a great nation, already born and well nurtured, takes on its manhood. For then has been attained a period when its whole vast area is brought within easy and immediate reach ; and means of communication, which is the highest attribute and outcome of civilization, will be possible for the promotion of man's best interests in time of peace, and, as we recently have seen, for his protection in time of war.

But not alone in railways is our noble country well served, but in all else that relates to progress. Her telegraph system is the most complete in the world, affording a service greater and cheaper than elsewhere ; her postal system, combined with savings banks, is the most comprehensive. Her progress in all the Arts, in her Universities, her Law Schools, her great and pure Judiciary, her enterprise in newspapers, and above all, the unimpeachable character of the rank and

file of her public men. But I have said enough to recall to you the many things of which, as Canadians, we may be proud, while living in this, our adopted land, enabling us with more than accustomed fervor and earnestness to say :

“Lives there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land !”